

**PLANT:** Cogongrass (*Imperata cylindrica*) is an aggressive colony-forming perennial grass, often forming circular infestations.

**IDENTIFICATION:** Grass is 1-5 ft. tall, often leaning into mats when over 3 ft. tall, tufts of long leaves, yellow-green, blades with off-center midvein, silver plumed flowers and seeds in spring, arising from sharp-tipped white-scaly rhizomes. Flowers in Alabama from February - May. Brown oblong seeds appear May-June and are released within silvery hairy husks for wind dispersal.

Resembles johnsongrass (*Sorghum halepense*), purpletop (*Tridens flavus*), silver plumegrass (*Saccharum alopecuroides*) and sugarcane plumegrasses (*S. giganteum*), but none have the off-centered whitish midvein and no stem.

**ECOLOGY:** Grows in full sunlight to partial shade, and can invade a range of sites. Aggressively invades rights-of-way, new forest plantations, open forests, old fields and pastures. Colonizes by rhizomes and spreads by wind-dispersed seeds. Rapidly growing and branching rhizomes form a dense mat enabling it to exclude most other vegetation. Burns extremely hot, especially in winter, and promoted by burning. Absent in areas with frequent tillage.

**SYNONYMS:** Japgrass, bloodroot (red variety).

**HERBICIDE CONTROL:** Apply a glyphosate herbicide as a 4% solution (1 pint per 3-gal. mix) or Arsenal AC as a 1% solution (4 ounces per 3-gal. mix), or combination of the two herbicides in water with a surfactant to thoroughly wet all foliage in September or October with multiple applications to regrowth. Apply herbicides in spring before flowering to suppress seed production to prevent spread. Multiple treatments in successive years will be required for eradication. **WARNING:** Arsenal AC can damage plants with roots in the treated area. Always read and follow label directions carefully.



Source: Nonnative Invasive Plants of Southern Forests, James Miller, 2004  
Photo Credit: G. Keith Douce, The University of Georgia, [www.forestryimages.org](http://www.forestryimages.org)



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